

Sinking Building Foundations

1058. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government do not possess adequate number of soil test equipments;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the reasons for the sinking of building foundations in Vasant Kunj in New Delhi; and

(d) the steps taken to check such sinking process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b). The Central Public Works Department has adequate number of soil testing equipment for soil testing in Delhi, however, the DDA does not have soil testing equipment. The work of soil testing being specialised nature is assigned to expert agencies well equipped with the soil test equipments as well as soil testing laboratory to analyse the samples of soils etc.

(c) Standard soil tests were got conducted in Pocket IV Sector 'C' Vasant Kunj also where subsidence of soil underneath the two blocks had taken place, however, these soil tests had not shown any cavity/tunnel underneath the ground. The subsidence in this pocket seems to be due to cavity deep in the ground.

(d) The DDA has requested the Central Building Research Institute Roorkee to conduct GEO-Radar survey to determine any cavities, soft strata/tunnel underneath the ground in pocket IV Sector 'C' Vasant Kunj. The results of investigation taken up by CBRI Roorkee are likely to be available by

the end of December, 91. One receipt of final report of the investigation strengthening of the structures including foundation of the affected blocks shall be undertaken. Effective remedial measures shall also be taken if the investigation reveals similar weak starta/tunnel/cavity in the zone other houses. These strengthening measures shall be taken in consultation with experts in the field & IIT Delhi.

Upgradation of Computer Technology

1059. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have taken any steps for upgrading computer technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether any instructions have been issued to the computer professionals in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) and (b). The Government are providing research and development for upgrading computer technology at the Centre for Development of Advanced Computer (CDAC) Pune, National Centre for Software Technology (NCST), Bombay and Electronics Research & Development Centre (ER&DC) Trivandrum. These centres are autonomous Societies under the Department of Electronics and are basically engaged in the research and development for upgrading the computer technology in the area of parallel computing, image processing and software development. Government have also launched programmes for the development of Knowledge Based Computer

System and Education Research in Computer Networking, with partial support from UNDP. These programmes are aimed at building institutional infrastructure training scientific manpower and undertaking research & development to solve some of the industrial problems using computer technology.

In addition, Government have also taken the following steps;

(i) As per the new Industrial Policy, the foreign equity up to 51% has been allowed under the automatic clearance scheme to encourage large companies including foreign companies having closely held technologies to setup manufacturing facilities in India. Similarly large units and foreign companies are allowed to have equity participation up to 24% in the small scale units.

(ii) The liberal import of designs and drawings have been allowed utilising the Exim Schemes.

(iii) The procedures for inviting foreign technicians/experts to assist the Indian companies in upgrading computer technology have been relaxed. Units can approach Reserve Bank of India directly for the release of foreign exchange.

(iv) The units have been given more autonomy for substantial expansion and broadbanding of their products.

(c) and (d). Liberalised policy measures taken by the Government have been given wide publicity and relevant press notes have been issued in this regard by the office of Chief Controller of Imports & Exports, Ministry of Industry and Reserve Bank of India.

Suggestion for Creation of a Consumer Welfare Fund.

1060. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received suggestions for the creation of a Consumers Welfare Fund.

(b) if so, whether the Government have also received representations for the constitution of a working group to study the Quasi-Judicial mechanism of a Public Utilities Commission to ensure public accountability by them; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. In the 10th meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council, two resolutions were passed for the creation of a Consumer Welfare Fund and for the constitution of a Working Group to study the Quasi-Judicial mechanism of a Public Utilities Commission to ensure public accountability. The working Group has already been constituted. Recently, Ministry of Finance has passed the Central Excises and Customs Laws (Amendment) Act, 1991 (No. 40 of 1991) which provides for creation of a Consumer Welfare Fund. The Fund will be utilised by the Govt. for the welfare of the consumers in accordance with such rules as Govt. may make in this behalf.

Increase in the Limit for Small Scale Industries

1061. SHRICHANDRESH PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposals/representations/